

Mission Self Advocacy Group

SUPPORTING PEOPLE WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES

December 3, 2009

Hon. Rich Coleman
130 – 7888 200th Street Langley, BC V2Y 3J4

Dear Minister Coleman:

The Mission Self Advocacy Group is angry at your government's decision to repeal sections of the Community Living Authority Act. Specifically the changes, as outlined in Bill 20, passed a third reading in the legislature last Wednesday the removal of the guarantee of people with disabilities and family members being on CLBC's governing board is another large step away from the original vision of the crown agency.

Furthermore, with no consultation with the community and no notice given to community stakeholders this impending change is even harder to accept.

To quote BCACL President Rory Summers "to say that it's not important to have people with disabilities or family members making decisions that affect their lives is to attack the core principles of community living". We concur with that assessment.

The statement that minister said about the reasoning behind this move. The Mission Self Advocacy Group wants an explanation as to what you meant by this. that the intent of the repeal is to "enable us to make a selection to the board of members from a wider pool of individuals," who fit the "skill set needed," implying that direct, lived experience is not a valued skill set and to imply that self advocates don't understand what work is involved in CLBC work that government wants self advocates on that board.

CLBC defines itself as an organization that recognizes "individuals with developmental disabilities and their families... are in the best position to understand what their needs are and how they should be met." It is absolutely imperative that people with developmental disabilities and families are represented on CLBC's board of directors.

Of course, governments are elected and have the power to make legislative changes as they see fit. However, on behalf of the board of the Mission Association for Community Living, let me add while that power rests with your government it is time-limited and there are always consequences for such actions.

Sincerely,

Bryce Schaufelberger Vice President
Mission Self Advocacy Group

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